

Message Text

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TAGS: ETRD, FW
SUBJ: BARBADIAN TRADE SHOW IN MARTINIQUE

1 THE BARBADIAN TRADE SHOW HELD AT THE HOTEL BATELIERE
IN FORT DE FRANCE ON JUNE 26-28, FEATURING ITEMS
MANUFACTURED IN BARBADOS WHICH RANGED FROM CONCENTRATED
MILK TO PLASTIC-COATED WIRE, PLAYED TO A SMALL BUT INTERESTED
AUDIENCE AND RECEIVED A FAIRLY GOOD RESPONSE.

2. ACCORDING TO ALEX LA SAUSSE, DIRECTOR OF TRADE
AND INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION AT THE MARTINIQUE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (CCIM) AND COORDINATOR OF THE
TRADE SHOW (AND, INCIDENTALLY, INTERNATIONAL VISITOR
GRANTEE TO THE "OUTLOOK FOR WORLD TRADE" REGIONAL
SEMINAR IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR), THE MARTINIQUE BUSINESS
COMMUNITY HAD WORRIED CONSIDERABLY ABOUT CHEAP MANU-
FACTURED GOODS FROM BARBADOS ENTERING MARTINIQUE DUTY-
FREE THROUGH THE LOME AGREEMENT AND COMPETING WITH LOCAL
PRODUCTS AND WITH THOSE FROM EUROPE. THEY WERE RELIEVED
TO SEE THAT THE BARBADIAN PRICES WERE, ON THE WHOLE,
COMPETITIVE WITH MARTINIQUE. THEIR RELIEF MAY BE SHORT-
LIVED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE MANY OF THEM THOUGHT THE PRICES
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WERE QUOTED IN US DOLLARS WHILE, ACCORDING TO LA SAUSSE,
ALL PRICES EXCEPT THOSE FOR THE RATTAN FURNITURE WERE
QUOTED IN BARBADIAN DOLLARS. IN FACT, THERE WAS GENERAL
CONFUSION ABOUT THE PRICES, AND EVEN ONE OF THE BARBADIAN
EXPORTERS SAID THE PRICES LISTED WERE IN US DOLLARS.

3. THE ITEMS WHICH DREW THE MOST ATTENTION, ACCORDING

TO LA SAUSSE AND CORROBORATED BY A LOCAL BUSINESSMAN, WERE THE DECRAMASTIC ROOFING MATERIAL, RATTAN FURNITURE AND SOLAR WATER HEATERS. MARTINIQUE ALREADY HAS A DISTRIBUTOR FOR DECRAMASTIC WHO IMPORTS FROM BARBADOS. THE EXHIBIT SERVED AS A GOOD ADVERTISEMENT FOR THIS DISTRIBUTOR. INTEREST WAS HIGH IN THE RATTAN FURNITURE DESPITE THE HIGH PRICES. (THE FURNITURE COULD HARDLY BE CALLED A SUPERIOR PRODUCT, HOWEVER. THE RATTAN SWIVEL CHAIR ON DISPLAY--LISTED AT US DOLS 400--WAS SO POORLY CONSTRUCTED THAT IF ONE LEANED BEFORE SWIVELING HE WOULD SWIVEL QUICKLY TO THE FLOOR. STILL THE FURNITURE PRESENTS AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO THE EXPENSIVE--AND NOT NECESSARILY HIGH QUALITY--EUROPEAN FURNITURE SOLD HERE.)

4. BY ALL ACCOUNTS THE SOLAR HEATER WAS THE MOST ATTRACTIVE PRODUCT EXHIBITED IN TERMS OF BOTH DEMAND AND PRICE, COSTING SEVERAL HUNDRED DOLLARS LESS PER UNIT THAN THE EUROPEAN-MADE EQUIVALENT NOW SOLD IN MARTINIQUE. THE OWNER OF THE HOTEL PLM BATELIERE (FORMERLY THE HILTON) STATED THAT IF THE SOLAR UNITS PROVED EFFECTIVE HE WOULD CONSIDER BUYING THEM FOR INSTALLATION IN THE NEW WING OF THE HOTEL WHICH IS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION. THE PLM MANAGEMENT ALSO PLANS TO PURCHASE ROOFING MATERIALS.

5. THE BARBADIAN TRADE SHOW WAS CO-SPONSORED BY BARBADIAN EXPORTERS AND THE MARTINIQUE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN RECIPROCITY FOR THE TRADE SHOW MOUNTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY MARTINQUAN EXPORTERS IN BARBADOS IN APRIL. THE CHAMBER HAS CONTINUED TO MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE TRADE BETWEEN THE FRENCH WEST INDIES AND THE OTHER CARIBBEAN ISLANDS. INITIAL PLANS ARE TO CONCENTRATE TRADE EXPANSION EFFORTS TO BARBADOS AND TRINIDAD.

6. MARTINQUAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OFFICIALS ADVISED POST THAT ITS NEXT TRADE SHOW WILL BE IN TRINIDAD TOWARD THE END OF THE YEAR. ROBINSON

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